



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES 12-16-09

Minutes of the Economic Development Committee held at the City Council Chambers, City of Newport Beach, on **Wednesday, December 16, 2009.**

Members Present:

X	Mike Henn, Chairman	E	Jennifer Gonzalez
X	Keith Curry, Mayor	X	John Hyatt
E	Steve Rosansky, Council Member	X	Lloyd Ikerd
E	Robert Hawkins, Planning Commissioner	X	Brion Jeannette
X	Mike McNamara, Vice Chairman	X	Debra Legan
X	Fred Ameri	X	Richard Luehrs
X	Craig Batley	E	Scott Palmer
X	Seymour Beek	X	John Robinson
X	Jeffrey Cole	X	Gregg Schwenk
X	Steven Coyne	X	Gary Sherwin
X	Kenneth Drellishak	X	Gay Wassall-Kelly
E	Sheri Drewry		

Staff Representatives:

X	Sharon Wood, Assistant City Manager		
X	Leigh De Santis, Economic Development Administrator		
E	Katie Bowden, Economic Development Coordinator		

Guests Present:

David Hsiang	Jim Mahoney
Kim Van Natta	John Corrough
Lee Chelgren	Steve ?

Roll Call and Introductions:

Council Member Henn called the meeting to order at 8:03 am and began self-introductions of the assembled members, staff and guests.

UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Councilman Henn announced that Keith Curry had been elected Mayor.
- Councilman Curry informed the group that Mike Henn had been elected Mayor Pro-Tem.
- Mr. Gary Sherwin reminded the group of upcoming local events.
 1. The Christmas Boat Parade begins tonight and runs through December 20th, ending in fireworks.
 2. The BCS teams and media will be staying in Newport Beach in January for that game at the Rose Bowl on January 7th. The associated Beef Bowl Dinner will be at the Newport Dunes.
 3. He also reported to the group that plans for the Barrett-Jackson Auto Auction, at the OC Fairgrounds on June 27-30, 2010, are progressing nicely. The impact of the show will be to nearly fill Newport Beach hotels that last week of June.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 1. Minutes of October 21, 2009.**
The November 2009 meeting was canceled.

Councilman Henn called for comments on the draft minutes. There being none Gregg Schwenk moved approval of the minutes and Mike McNamara seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

- 2. Recommendation of Candidates for Appointment to fill an At-Large and the Fashion Island/Newport Center positions.**

Economic Development Administrator, Leigh De Santis, introduced Mr. David Hsiang and Ms. Kimberly Van Natta to the Committee for consideration of being recommended to the City Council for appointment to the EDC. Each candidate spoke briefly about themselves. Chairman Henn moved recommending the candidates to the City Council. The candidates were unanimously approved for recommendation.

- 3. Consideration of Recommending an Extension of the Relaxation of the Temporary Banner Regulations.**

In October 2008 the City Council, based on the recommendation of the EDC, relaxed City regulations governing promotional temporary banners. That dispensation is due to expire December 31, 2009. The EDC was asked if they wished to recommend a one year extension of the relaxed policy until December 31, 2010. Economic conditions have not yet recovered and the additional time granted under the temporary relaxation was much appreciated by the business community. The EDC concluded that the relaxation had not led to visual clutter and had been of value. Richard Luehrs moved that the EDC recommend a one year extension. Seymour Beek seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Craig Batley closed the topic by

recommending that should the City Council grant the extension, staff should make a new effort to publicize the availability of the program.

4. Presentation by Mike McNamara, Chairman of the Summer Water Taxi Committee of the Committee's Report

Mr. McNamara made a PowerPoint presentation of the Water Taxi System Conceptual Feasibility Analysis report. The report had been presented to the City Council in a study session on November 24, 2009. The city council requested that it be sent to the EDC and the Harbor Commission for review prior to returning to the City Council for action.

Following the presentation EDC members offered comments and asked questions.

Seymour Beek expressed his opinion that a Water Taxi could not operate without a subsidy. He also strongly recommended that for a Water Taxi to be successful, it would need a highly visible home base to attract riders, probably the Fun Zone and maybe Marina Park. He said that he thought about half the ridership would just be interested in a boat ride.

Steve Coyne thought that the Junior Life guards and other summer beach class users might be persuaded to get season tickets to go from Mariner's Mile down the Peninsula making drop off easier for parents. He wondered about the suitability of Duffy Boats for the service.

Lloyd Ikerd asked about the ability to meet ADA requirements.

Jim Mahoney reminded those present that he operated the Gondolas and a small on-call water taxi. He said that Costs were high and that not all restaurants with docks were receptive to a water taxi. He calls restaurants to verify his passenger's reservations before setting out.

John Robinson verified that a number of restaurants are fearful about a permanent stop being a liability and not generating more restaurant business if their dock was advertised as a permanent stop on a loop taxi system.

Craig Batley summarized his understanding that most likely a water taxi would require 1) a city subsidy 2) require the cooperation of those businesses with docks to participate 3) lots of advertising and signs to promote the water taxi and 4) a visible home location.

It was suggested that maybe a survey could be conducted by mail of residents to determine level of potential use and support should a subsidy be needed.

Gary Sherwin volunteered that Visit Newport Beach would pledge its support to underwrite an ad campaign. However, he agreed that City in-kind support with docks and signage was crucial.

Craig Batley moved that the EDC support the Water Taxi Committee's recommendation to the City Council that an RFP be prepared and distributed to test

the private sector market/ability to provide water taxi service. His motion also included encouraging that a survey be done to gauge demand/support.

John Corrough, a Water Taxi Committee member, said the Committee's take on many of the issues raised in the discussion could be found in the report.

The EDC voted to support Craig Batley's motion.

5. EQAC Representative's Report

EQAC has finished reviewing the Draft EIR for Sunset Ridge Park. They will begin reviewing the Draft EIR for Marina Park in January 2010.

ITEMS FOR A FUTURE AGENDA

- Revenue and Budget Update - January
- Tourism Update – January or February
- Geo Area Representative Report on Holiday Business Season - February

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Henn called for the meeting to be adjourned at 9:20 am.